

Advisory Bulletin No. 6
Revised, December 1994

Calendar of Field Operations for tea in Hilly Areas [Darjeeling, Sikkim, etc.]

(First published in May, 1973 as 'Planting Calendar for Darjeeling'
by W. J. Grice and S.K. Sarkar)

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Published by Tea Research Association, Tocklai Experimental Station, Jorhat
and Printed at Assam Printing Works (P) Ltd., Jorhat

January

1. Nursery

- (a) Clonal : Test soil of nursery site for May/June propagation. Water or irrigate the autumn planted cuttings if necessary.
- (b) Seed : Complete sowing of seed by first week. Water or irrigate if necessary.
- (c) Shade : Water or irrigate if necessary.

2. Grafting

Continue grafting.

Check moisture inside the polythene bags of the bushes grafted in November and December.

Remove polythene bags where union is complete and scion growth is turgid.

3. Planting

- (a) Tea : Do not plant.
- (b) Shade : Do not plant.

4. Pruning and skiffing

- (a) Young tea : Check starch reserves in roots. If found adequate, decentre/thumb prune/debud. Start frame forming prune from end of the month and remove congestion selectively.
- (b) Mature tea : Medium, light or level-off skiff: Complete by 1st week if not completed in December.
- Cleaning out** : Hand debanji, knife and hand cleaning out operations should be completed.
- Alkaline wash** : Apply alkaline wash on the bushes after pruning where necessary.

5. Manuring

Wait for ground manuring. Continue foliar application of MOP in dry spell.

6. Plucking

Pluck off banjhi shoots in tea left unpruned and without a level-off skiff.

7. Rehabilitation and green crops

Nothing needs to be done.

8. Mulching

Replenish mulch where necessary.

9. Drainage

Continue cleaning, deepening and/or regrading of drains if necessary. Subsidiary drains should be deepened upto 100 cm in flat lands and upto 45 cm in contour drains in slopes.

10. Weed control

- (a) Chemical : Do not start.
- (b) Manual : Start cold weather collar forking. Cover the exposed roots with soil.

11 Pest and disease control

- (a) Check all spraying equipment. Replace the worn out parts and paint corroded parts. Test the sprayers for correct output pressure. Keep ready the drums, tins and pesticides. These works should be finished in the first fortnight.
- (b) Check for initial infestation of *Helopeltis*, red spider and other mites and spray immediately if observed. Where necessary, spray a blanket round. Sections earmarked for unprune if infested by *Helopeltis*, pluck off infested shoots even from below the table. Check for damage by thrips, jassids, aphids, scale insects and mealy bugs.

Continue to control termites by thorough spraying at the collar region of the bushes and the frame and irrigate if possible.

Fork the soil and to collect, and destroy the chrysalids of looper caterpillars in infested areas. Watch for pierid caterpillars in shade nurseries and trees.

- (c) Against blister blight, check nurseries and spray, if necessary.

February

1. Nursery

- (a) Clonal : If sufficient rain has fallen, give light hoeing to V.P. nursery site and prepare beds. Water or irrigate the autumn planted cuttings. If there is shoot growth of about 5 cm of autumn planted cutting, gradually thin out shade.
- (b) Seed : Water or irrigate if necessary.
- (c) Shade : Water or irrigate if necessary.

2. Grafting

Complete cold weather grafting. Check inside of polythene bags whether adequate amount of moisture is there of the bushes grafted in December-January.

Remove polythene bags where union is complete and scion growth is turgid.

Start thinning out shade, in cloudy weather, of bushes grafted in October.

3. Planting

- (a) Tea : Do not plant.
- (b) Shade : Do not plant.

4. Pruning and skiffing

Young tea : Check starch reserve in roots. If found adequate, continue decentre/thumb prune.
Complete frame forming prune within first fortnight and remove congestion selectively.

Alkaline wash : Apply alkaline wash on the bushes after pruning where necessary.

5. Manuring

- (a) Mature and young tea : If the tea is under irrigation or there has been sufficient rain, manure unpruned, level-off or light skiffed mature and young teas by end of the month.

Continue spraying MOP if droughty condition prevails.

- (b) Nursery plants : Spray MOP if droughty condition prevails.

6. Plucking

Remove banjhl in tea left unpruned during early part of the month.

7. Rehabilitation and green crops

Nothing needs to be done.

8. Mulching

Replenish mulch where necessary.

9. Drainage

Continue cleaning, deepening and/or regrading of the drains.

10. Weed control

(a) Chemical : Do not start.

(b) Manual : Continue cold weather collar forking, thullying, cover exposed roots with soil and uproot weeds from collar region.

11. Pest and disease control

Continue to check for initial infestation of red spider and other mites and spray, if observed.

Control Helopeltis, thrips, jassids, aphids, scale insects, mealy bugs, etc. if they appear. If infested by Helopeltis in unpruned teas pluck off infested shoots even from below the table.

Complete control measures against termites.

Watch for leaf eating caterpillars in shade nurseries and young trees.

Check nurseries for blister blight and spray, if necessary.

March

1. Nursery

- (a) Clonal : Provide shade over beds for May-June propagation. Start filling sleeves with soil for May/June propagation from early part of the month in low elevation and from about mid of the month in mid and high elevations. Place filled sleeves immediately under a shade.

Continue thinning out shade in autumn planted cuttings. Water or irrigate, if necessary.

- (a) Seed : Water or irrigate, if necessary.
(c) Shade : Sow seeds, if there has been rain or there is a provision for irrigation.

2. Grafting

Check moisture inside the polythene bags. Remove polythene bags of the bushes grafted in January and February.

Remove polythene bags where union is complete and scion growth is turgid.

Continue thinning out of shade of the bushes grafted in October-November.

3. Planting

- (a) Tea : Do not plant.
(b) Shade : Do not plant.

4. Pruning and skiffing

In medium and high elevation continue decentre/debud of the young plants provided starch reserves adequate.

5. Manuring

If soil is sufficiently moist following pre-monsoon showers, apply fertilizers to all mature teas. Start with unpruned and then go to skiffed teas. If there is a dry spell, continue foliar spray of nutrients.

Apply YTD mixture in young tea.

Manure nursery plants.

6. Plucking

Continue plucking unpruned tea. Tip and pluck level-off, light and medium skiffed teas.

7. Rehabilitation and green crops

Start preparing land for planting rehabilitation and green crops.

8. Mulching

Replenish mulch where necessary.

9. Drainage

Complete cleaning, deepening and/or regrading of the drains by middle of this month.

10. Weed control

- (a) Chemical : Use post-emergent contact herbicides on fresh regrowth.
Apply sublethal doses on slopes.
Adopt strip weed control leaving sickled strips in between herbicide strips.
Do not use pre-emergent herbicides on slopes.
- (b) Manual : Continue cold weather collar forking, cover exposed roots with soil and uproot weeds from collar region.

11. Pest and disease control

Control mites, *Helopeltis*, thrips, Jassids, bunch caterpillar, scale insects crickets cerambycid borer, root mealy bugs where necessary.

Hand collect bunch caterpillar and use light trap for moths.

Use pesticides having high MRL (Maximum Residue Level) values. Use of acaricides and insecticides **must be** restricted to only infested patches.

Watch for leaf eating caterpillars for shade nurseries and young trees.

Against blister blight, spray copper fungicide at 7-10 days interval till the weather becomes hot and sunny.

April

1. Nursery

- (a) Clonal : Water or irrigate autumn nursery as and when necessary.
Complete bed preparation for autumn propagation and keep under mulch coverage.
Complete filling sleeves and bed preparation and provide shade over bed/sleeve for May-June.
Remove shade from previous year's nursery.
- (b) Seed : Remove mulch as soon as the dry spell is over. Water or irrigate if the dry spell continues.
- (c) Shade : Complete sowing of seeds. Water or irrigate when necessary.

2. Grafting

Check moisture inside the polythene bags of bushes grafted in February.
Remove polythene bags where union is complete and scion growth is turgid.
Thin out shade of the bushes grafted in October, November and December.

3. Planting

- (a) Tea : Do not plant.
- (b) Shade : Start planting in lower elevation if soil is moist.

4. Pruning and skiffing

In medium and high elevation, continue decentre/thumb prune/debud of young plants provided starch reserve is adequate.
Remove "breather" in heavy pruned tea.

5. Manuring

- (a) Nursery plants : Apply YTD mixture or foliar nutrients if growth is poor (for details of foliar nutrients refer Advisory Bulletin No. 3 (Revised)).
- (b) Young tea : Continue application of YTD mixture.
- (c) Mature tea : Complete fertilizer application by first week except pruned areas. Apply zinc as foliar spray on unpruned and light skiffed teas towards the end of first flush.

6. Plucking

Continue tipping of skiffed and pruned teas as per necessity. Tip young teas.
Raise a leaf in debilitated unpruned tea towards the end of first flush.
Pluck unpruned tea in shorter rounds and remove banjhis while plucking.

7. Rehabilitation and green crops

If soil is moist, start planting on the contour in uprooted areas and complete by end of the month.
Sow seeds of green crops every row particularly where soil fertility status is not satisfactory and

where land is slopy.

Cut down rehabilitation crops and green crops, which are two years old, in preparing for planting of tea.

8. Mulching

Replenish mulch where necessary.

9. Drainage

Keep the drains weed free.

10. Weed control

- (a) Chemical : Use post-emergent contact herbicides on fresh regrowth.
Apply sublethal doses on slopes.
Adopt strip weed control, leaving sickled strips in between herbicide strips.
Do not use pre-emergent herbicides on slopes.
- (b) Manual : Complete forking at the collar region and uproot weeds by covering of exposed roots if not completed in March.

11. Pest and disease control

Use of acaricides and insecticides **must be** restricted to only infested patches. Neem or other botanical products and sulphur formulation can be used for blanket application if necessary. Use only recommended products with minimum residue hazard.

Check the established M.R.L's for pesticides before use.

Control *Helopeltis* mites, thrips, jassids, aphids, flush worm, scale insects, bunch caterpillar, red borer, cricket, cockchafer and root mealy bug as and when necessary.

Control shade nurseries and young trees against caterpillars, membracids, psyllids etc.

Control red rust and spray copper fungicide where necessary.

May

1. Nursery

- (a) Clonal : Start planting of cuttings in low elevation from early part of the month and in mid and high elevation start planting in later part of the month.
- (b) Seed : Complete removal of mulch cover. Lop and thin out the green crops grown in the nursery towards end May. Start thinning out overhead shade.
- (c) Shade : Check for pests and diseases. Water or irrigate if required.

2. Grafting

Not a good month for grafting.

Remove polythene bags where union is completed and scion growth is turgid.

Thin out shade from the bushes grafted in February.

Remove shade from the bushes grafted in October-November in a cloudy day.

3. Planting

- (a) Tea : Start planting and infilling if soil is moist.
- (b) Shade : Complete planting.

4. Pruning and skiffing

Nothing needs to be done.

5. Manuring

- (a) Nursery plants : Apply YTD mixture or foliar nutrients if growth is poor.
- (b) Young tea : Apply YTD mixture.
- (c) Mature tea : Complete application of fertilizers to pruned teas.

6. Plucking

Continue hard plucking of unpruned, level-off and light skiffed teas and remove banjhis while plucking. Maintain a flat plucking table. Continue tipping of young, light pruned, cut-backed teas.

7. Rehabilitation and green crops

Complete planting.

Thin out the green crops grown for shade in young tea areas as per necessity.

8. Mulching

Mulch newly planted areas.

Replenish mulch where necessary.

9. Drainage

Clean the drains if there is any sitting.

10. Weed control

- (a) Chemical : Complete 1st round of herbicide if not done in April by early part of the month.
Apply sublethal doses on slopes.
Adopt strip weed control, leaving sickled strips in between herbicide strips.
Do not use pre-emergent herbicides on slopes.
- (b) Manual : Nothing needs to be done.

11. Pest and disease control

Use of acaricides and insecticides **must be** restricted to only infested patches. Neem or other botanical products and sulphur formulation can be used for blanket application if necessary. Use only recommended products with minimum residue hazard.

Check the established M.R.L.'s for pesticides before use.

Control mites, *Helopeltis*, thrips, jassids, bunch caterpillars, aphids, scale insects, psyllids, cricket, cockchafer if necessary.

Control caterpillars, membracids, psyllids, etc. in shade nurseries and young trees.

Spray copper fungicide against red rust.

June

1. Nursery

- (a) Clonal : Complete planting of cuttings at all elevations.
Check for drip damage. Keep clean weeded.
- (b) Seed : Lop and thin out the green crops in end June.
Thin out overhead shade further. Keep clean weeded.
- (c) Shade : Keep clean weeded and free of pests.

2. Grafting

Fair success normally follows grafting in this month.

Remove shade from the bushes grafted in November-December and January in a cloudy day.

3. Planting

- (a) Tea : Continue planting and infilling.
- (b) Shade : Complete planting by early part of the month if not completed in May.

4. Pruning and skiffing

Deep skiff the clonal mother bushes during early part of the month in low elevation to take cuttings in September.

5. Manuring

In nursery plants, continue application of YTD mixture.

Continue application of YTD mixture in young tea.

In mature tea apply second split of fertilizers where split application is followed, but differ it to September in water logged areas.

In waterlogged areas, spray Urea, DAP, MOP mixture.

6. Plucking

Continue hard plucking of unpruned, level-off and light skiffed teas and remove banjhis while plucking and maintain a flat plucking table.

Give black plucking when blister appears in areas under plucking.

Tip heavy pruned teas.

Start giving rest to the bushes at mid and high elevation proposed for heavy pruning if the area is not blister blight prone.

7. Rehabilitation and green crops

Weed if necessary.

8. Mulching

Mulch newly planted areas

Repeinish mulch where necessary

9. Drainage

Check the blockage of the drains.

Start recording water table build up in areas suspected to be waterlogged.

10. Weed control

(a) Chemical : Complete spraying of 2nd round of herbicide as per necessity. Apply sub lethal doses in steep slopes. Do not spray on drain edges.

(b) Manual : Start sickling as and when necessary.

11. Pest and disease control

Use of acaricides and insecticides **must be** restricted to only infested patches. Neem or other botanical products and sulphur formulation can be used for blanket application if necessary. Use only recommended products with minimum residue hazard. Check the established M.R.L.'s for pesticides before use.

Control Helopeltis, thrips, jassids, scale insects and cockchafer.

Spray shade nurseries and young trees with suitable insecticides against caterpillars, membracids, psyllids, etc.

Special protective measure against blister blight is necessary in young and other vulnerable areas.

One round Calyxin spray by 3rd week of June followed by spraying COC is necessary.

July

1. Nursery

- (a) Clonal : Complete planting of cutting by mid of the month, if not completed in June, provided climatic condition is favourable.

Repair drip damage. Keep clean by weeding.

- (b) Seed : Keep clean by weeding.

- (c) Shade : Keep clean by weeding.

2. Grafting

Fair success normally follows grafting in the month.

Remove shade from bushes grafted in February in a cloudy day.

3. Planting

- (a) Tea : Complete planting and infilling.

- (b) Shade : Do not plant.

4. Pruning and skiffing

May planted tea will be ready for thump nallling/decentering.

5. Manuring

- (a) Nursery plants : Apply YTD mixture.

- (b) Young tea : Apply YTD mixture.

- (c) Mature tea : Continue foliar nutrients to tea under waterlogged conditions where leaves have turned yellowish.

Apply NPK mixture to deep skiffed clonal mother bushes with new foliage.

6. Plucking

Follow standard plucking. Maintain a flat plucking table. Continue black plucking in areas where blister blight appears. At high elevations if heavy pruned tea is short of tipping height and affected by blister blight tip, pluck at lower level. Continue giving rest to the debilitated bushes at mid and high elevations due for heavy pruning next month, if not a blister blight prone area.

7. Rehabilitation and green crops

Weed where necessary.

Lop rehabilitation crop where necessary. Green crop should be cut at the ground level when they attain a height say 150 cm and left *in situ*.

8. Mulching

Continue mulching in newly planted areas.

9. Drainage

Check and clean the drains wherever necessary. Continue recording of water table build-up in

areas suspected to be waterlogged.

10. Weed control

- (a) Chemical : Do not spray weedicide.
- (b) Manual : Repeat sickling where necessary.

11. Pest and disease control

Use of acaricides and insecticides **must be** restricted to only infested patches. Neem or other botanical products and sulphur formulation can be used for blanket application if necessary. Use only recommended products with minimum residue hazard. Check the established M.R.L.'s for pesticides before use.

Spray the nurseries against pests and diseases if noticed.

Control *Helopeltis* and other pests, if they persist.

Spray suitable insecticides in shade nurseries and young trees against caterpillars and other leaf eating insects if necessary. Control mites, *Helopeltis*, scale insects.

Control blister blight giving special attention to pruned, young and nursery teas. Spray copper fungicide at 7-10 days interval till weather becomes hot and sunny.

August

1 Nursery

- (a) Clonal : Keep clean by weeding. Start gradual removal of shade from the May-June propagated beds after cuttings have produced 2-3 leaves. Repair drip damage.

Remove all undecomposed materials from the beds for September propagation. Provide shade over the beds.

- (b) Seed : Remove all the green crops by the second week. Remove overhead shade by 2nd week. Keep clean weeded.
- (c) Shade : Weed if necessary.

2 Grafting

Not a good month for grafting.

Remove shade of bushes grafted in February in a cloudy day.

3 Planting

- (a) Tea : Do not plant.
- (b) Shade : Do not plant.

4. Pruning and skiffing

Provided starch reserves adequate in the roots, start heavy pruning in mid and high elevations in early part of the month. Apply indopaste to all large cuts within 24 hours particularly where heavy pruning was necessary following an attack of *Aglaospora*.

Alkaline wash : Apply alkaline wash on the bush frame after pruning where necessary.

5. Manuring

- (a) Nursery plants : Continue applying YTD mixture if required. Apply foliar nutrients if the plants look weak.
- (b) Young tea : Apply YTD mixture. Apply foliar nutrients if the plants look weak.
- (c) Mature tea : Apply NPK mixture to deep skiffed clonal mother bushes with new foliage. Apply foliar nutrients to tea under waterlogged condition where the leaves have turned yellowish.

6. Plucking

Avoid any extra creep and maintain a flat plucking table.

Continue giving rest to the bushes proposed for heavy pruning.

7. Rehabilitation and green crops

Lop where necessary.

8. Mulching

Mulch heavy pruned areas.

Complete mulching in newly planted areas.
Replenish mulch where necessary.

9. Drainage

Check and clear the drains wherever necessary.
Continue observation of water table.

10. Weed control

- (a) Chemical : Do not spray weedicide.
- (b) Manual : Repeat sickling if required.

11. Pest and disease control

Use of acaricides and insecticides **must be** restricted to only infested patches. Neem or other botanical products and sulphur formulation can be used for blanket application if necessary. Use only recommended products with minimum residue hazard. Check the established M.R.L.'s for pesticides before use.

Spray the nurseries against pests, if they still persist.
Continue spraying against *Helopeltis* where necessary.
Do spot application of acaricide if red spider and other mites are still prevalent.

In areas prone to canker, spray young shade tree plants in the field and the nursery when the canker causing insects *Agilus beesonii* and *Cryptorrhynchus* sp. are active and laying eggs.

Control in shade nurseries along with young trees against caterpillars, membricids, etc.
Spray copper fungicide against black rot if appear.
Control blister blight, taking special care for pruned and young tea.

September

1. Nursery

- (a) Clonal : Plant cuttings in low elevation within the month.
Continue thinning out of shade from the beds of May-June propagation.
- (b) Seed : Keep clean by weeding.
- (c) Shade : Keep clean by weeding.

2. Grafting

Not good month for grafting.

3. Planting

- (a) Tea : Do not plant.
- (b) Shade : Do not plant.

4. Pruning and skiffing

- (a) Mature tea : Provided starch reserves adequate in the roots, continue heavy pruning in mid and high elevations in early part of the month. Apply Indopaste to all large cuts within 24 hours particularly where heavy pruning was necessary following an attack of *Aglaospora*.

- (b) Mother bushes : Start pruning in blocks and cleaning of clonal mother bushes in low elevation from end of the month for May propagation.

Start pruning and deep skiffing in alternate years in mid elevation.

Alkaline wash : Apply alkaline wash on the bush frame after pruning, where necessary.

5. Manuring

- (a) Nursery plants : Continue YTD mixture application if required and/or apply foliar nutrients if the growth is poor.
- (b) Young tea : Apply YTD mixture. Spray zinc and urea.
- (c) Mature tea : Apply second split of fertilizers in waterlogged areas.
Apply zinc as foliar spray in the beginning of autumn flush.
Apply NPK foliar nutrients if leaves turned yellowish.

6. Plucking

In pruned/deep skiffed tea, pluck only mature shoots leaving small 1+Bud shoots and pluck on to the highest points to fill up depressions if any.

In unpruned/light skiffed tea, pluck back for one round towards end of the month to remove the banjhis.

Start giving rest to the bushes due for heavy pruning during October-November in low elevation.

7. Rehabilitation and green crops

Lop where necessary.

8. Mulching

Mulch heavy pruned areas.

Replenish mulch where necessary.

9. Drainage

Check and clean the drains wherever necessary. Continue recording of water table build-up in areas suspected to be waterlogged.

10. Weed control

- (a) Chemical : Spray 3rd round of weedicide by mid of the month where necessary.
Do not use pre-emergent herbicide on slopes.
Apply sublethal doses on slopes.
Adopt strip weed control, leaving sickled strips in between herbicide strips.
- (b) Manual : Continue sickling on slopes where manual weed control is practiced.

11. Pest and disease control

Use of acaricides and insecticides **must be** restricted to only infested patches. Neem or other botanical products and sulphur formulation can be used for blanket application, if necessary. Use only recommended products with minimum residue hazard. Check the established M.R.L.'s for pesticides before use.

Spray the nurseries against pests if these still persist.

Check for red spider and other mites. Do spot spraying where necessary.

Continue spraying against *Helopeltis*.

Spray shade nurseries against leaf eating insects if necessary.

Against blister blight, spray copper fungicide at 7-10 days interval till the weather becomes hot and sunny.

October

1. Nursery

- (a) Clonal : Continue thinning out of shade from the beds of May/June propagation.
- (b) Seed : Remove all undercomposed woody parts of green crops and prepare the beds for sowing seeds.
Prepare beds for sowing seeds.
- (c) Shade : Weed if necessary.

2. Grafting

Start cold weather grafting programme.

If there is accumulation of water at the base of the polythene bags, drain out and retie immediately.

3. Planting

- (a) Tea : Do not plant.
- (b) Shade : Do not plant.

4. Pruning and skiffing

- (a) Mature tea : Start heavy pruning of the mature tea at low elevation. Apply indopaste on all large cuts within 24 hours.
- (b) Mother bushes : Complete pruning and cleaning of clonal mother bushes by middle of the month in low elevation for June month propagation.

Prune and deep skiff clonal mother bushes in alternate years at mid elevation.

Alkaline wash : Apply alkaline wash on the bush frame after pruning, where necessary.

5. Manuring

- (a) Nursery plants : Apply YTD mixture or foliar nutrients where necessary.
- (b) Young tea : Apply YTD mixture, if required, or NPK foliar nutrients if plants look weak.
- (c) Mature tea : Spray NPK mixture on weak mature tea.
Apply zinc as foliar spray in pruned and deep skiffed teas in the beginning of autumn flush.

6. Plucking

Avoid undue creep in plucking. Step up by one leaf if maintenance foliage is unhealthy or inadequate in tea due to unprune, by end of the month.

Continue giving rest to the bushes proposed for heavy pruning during November in low elevation.

7. Rehabilitation and green crops

Complete lopping by early part of the month if not completed in September.

8. Mulching

Mulch heavy pruned areas.

Replenish mulch in young tea areas, where necessary.

9. Drainage

Nothing needs to be done.

10. Weed control

(a) Chemical : Do spot application if necessary.

(b) Manual : Sickle if necessary where manual weed control is practised.

11. Pest and disease control

Use of acaricides and insecticides **must be** restricted to only infested patches. Neem or other botanical products and sulphur formulation can be used for blanket application, if necessary. Use only recommended products with minimum residue hazard. Check the established M.R.L.'s for pesticides before use.

Check for red spider and other mites and do spot spraying if necessary.

Control root mealy bugs.

Spray against leaf eating insects in shade nurseries and young trees.

Continue spray against blister blight particularly in nurseries.

November

1. Nursery

- (a) Clonal : Water or irrigate when necessary.
Thin out shade or raise frames from beds planted during June/July.
- (b) Seed : Sow seeds soon after harvesting and keep under mulch cover. Water or irrigate when necessary.
- (c) Shade : Keep clean weeded. Water or irrigate when necessary.

2 Grafting

Continue grafting.

Check whether inside the polythene bags adequate amount of water is there of bushes grafted in October.

3. Planting

- (a) Tea : Do not plant.
- (b) Shade : Do not plant.

4 Pruning and skiffing

Complete heavy pruning at low elevation and cut back pruning at high and mid elevations by first week.

Start light pruning and deep skiffing from middle of the month.

Prune and skiff clonal mother bushes in each alternate year in mid and high elevations for May-June propagation.

Cleaning out : Hand debanjhi, knife cleaning out operations should be carried out just after pruning/skiffing.

Alkaline wash : Apply alkaline wash on the bush frame after pruning where necessary.

5 Manuring

Apply foliar spray of MOP in tea left unpruned.

6 Plucking

Pluck off banjhi shoots carefully. Complete "stepping-up" in sections to be left unpruned next year.

7 Rehabilitation and green crops

Complete thinning out of green crops in young tea areas.

8. Mulching

Complete mulching by mid of the month where necessary.

9. Drainage

Start cleaning, deepening and regrading of the drains.

Start contour survey and marking contour drains on slopes.

10. Weed control

Do not spray.

Do not sickle.

11. Pest and disease control

Use of acaricides and insecticides ~~must be~~ restricted to only infested patches. Neem or other botanical products and sulphur formulation can be used for blanket application if necessary. Use only recommended products with minimum residue hazard. Check the established M.R.L.'s for pesticides before use.

Control mites, *Helopeltis*, thrips and jassids.

Spray shade nurseries and trees against leaf eating insects.

Take care while pruning and spray against *Aglaospora* if noticed.

December

1. Nursery

- (a) Clonal : Water or irrigate when necessary.
Thin out overhead shade or raise frames where necessary.
- (b) Seed : Continue sowing of seeds. Water or irrigate if necessary.
- (c) Shade : Water or irrigate when necessary.

2. Grafting

Continue grafting.
Check moisture inside the polythene bags grafted in October and November.

3. Planting

- (a) Tea : Do not plant.
- (b) Shade : Do not plant.

4. Pruning and skiffing

- i) Cut back : In low elevation complete by the month.
- ii) Light pruning : Complete by mid December at all elevations.
- iii) Deep skiff : Complete by second week at all elevations.
- iv) Level off skiff : Complete by last week.

Cleaning out : Hand debanji, knife cleaning out operations should be completed in pruned/deep skiffed sections.

Alkaline wash : Apply alkaline wash on the bushes after pruning where necessary.

5. Manuring

Give foliar application of MOP in dry spell on teas to be left unpruned.

6. Plucking

Pluck at slightly extended round. Prepare a flat and compact plucking surface by filling up depressions/empty pockets in sections to be kept unpruned.

In low elevations, plucking should be finished by the first week of this month.

7. Rehabilitation and green crops

Nothing needs to be done.

8. Mulching

Mulch cut back areas.
Replenish mulch where necessary.

9. Drainage

Clean, deepen and regrade the drains. Continue contour survey and marking of drains. Start digging of contour drains in slope areas to be planted.

10. Weed control

Do not spray.

Do not sickle.

11. Pest and disease control

Check the nurseries for pests and spray suitable pesticides if noticed.

Take steps for termite control in infested areas after pruning. Remove earth runs, dead and dying branches. Indopaste the cut surfaces within 48 hours. Spray pesticide after forking the soil in collar region of bushes and irrigate, if possible, both before and after spraying. Control ants.

Collection of chrysalids of bunch from the ground, from fork of the bush and fold of leaves.

Light trapping or hand collection of red slug caterpillar moths.

Spray shade nurseries and young trees against leaf eating insects.

